

**Stay in touch! If you have an interesting topic you'd like to share or a question just get in touch and we'll publish or try to answer.**

***Our next meeting on 20 April is the Annual General Meeting. This is when we look back over the past year's activities and plan for the 2022 season. We'll be electing new, or confirming current, members of the Executive Committee and agreeing the subscription rates payable for the year beginning 1 May. The business meeting should be fairly brief and there will then be a talk by former Hon Treasurer, Gary Thornton, 'The Romans in The Fylde'.***

The AGM will start at 7.30pm at The Centre, Great Eccleston.



The Centre, Great Eccleston. Entrance arrowed.

March has already seen a fair amount of activity. As you may have read in the Wigan AS Newsletter recently distributed, a geophys survey was carried out at **Hurst Grange Park**, the former site of a large house and estate created in 1848 as the home of a local judge, William Hulton, and now a public green space. The estate, and others, on the hill above the River Ribble provided for the gentry a rural retreat from the grime of industrial Preston. You can read more about the site at <https://www.southribble.gov.uk/hurstgrangepark>



former mansion. Working closely with South Ribble Borough Council, the group was able to secure significant Heritage Lottery funding and have now converted the Coach House into a café and event space. We were approached by the FoHGP early in March to ask if we might be able to help the group trace the footprint of the original mansion under the landscaped park. At a site meeting we suggested that a geophys survey would be the best way to begin, followed – depending on the results – by an excavation to reveal any existing archaeology.



(Above: The now renovated Hurst Grange Coach House)

Since we don't have the necessary equipment, we approached our colleagues at Wigan Archaeological Society who have helped us in the past and they were able to carry out what proved to be a very successful survey.

The image below, courtesy of Wigan Archaeological Society, shows the dark shadows of the GRS plot overlaid in red with approximate outline of existing archaeology.

A group of local volunteers, Friends of Hurst Grange Park was formed in 2003 to help maintain and improve the amenities of the park and in 2014 formed a project team specifically to work on the renovation of the Coach House, the only remaining building of the



We now hope to carry out an excavation to reveal exactly what the features shown by the survey may be.

Meanwhile our dig at the **Brock riverside cottage** continues, with more amazing features being revealed. Kev's photo below shows more of the paved floor in the northern 'room' despite work being hampered in some areas by tree roots.



Most of the regular Brock team were on site on Saturday 9 April to meet the landowner, Francis Fitzherbert-Brockholes and his wife, Jenny, and to explain what had so far been discovered.

When we began excavation in 2019 the cottage had lain hidden under centuries of accumulated debris, soil and undergrowth, only slight mounds hinting at its existence. The difficulties of the past two years slowed down the dig but a dedicated team has made astonishing progress since last November. However, as much as the excavation has progressed over that period, we're still no nearer a complete understanding of the building and its purpose.

Recent finds of what appears to be fine window-glass and lead frames plus very robust foundations in the southern 'room' suggest a possibly more higher-status habitation than previously thought. The project will continue!



Photo: Dave Hampson  
 Meet the diggers. Jenny & Francis Fitzherbert-Brockholes (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> from left) meet the team: Helen (far left), Dave B, Andy, Mike, Sian, Kev & Colin. **Note the huge foundation boulders in the trench.**

Other regular team members include Chris B and Simon. Sarah, Bethany, Steve K and Dave H have also taken part in the dig.

### FARMER PARR'S MUSEUM. – Help please!

Members may not know that, for many years, Wyre Archaeology has had a small display cabinet at Farmer Parr's Fylde Museum of Country Life. It's now getting a little tired and in need of a revamp.

So we're now faced with the decision as to whether we do it up or close it completely. We're therefore seeking your help and would like to invite any member or members who'd like to put their display talent to work to let us know.

It would not be a particularly onerous or time-consuming activity but it does need a fresh approach.

**Apology:** I recently circulated information about CBA lectures with the statement that, as affiliate members, access to these would be free or at reduced rate. Following a query, CBA have informed me that this is not the case at the moment but they are reviewing all membership benefits and will provide information in due course. I'm sorry if anyone has been disappointed.

### WEBSITES WORTH VISITING

- Lancashire's Roman Roads (David Ratledge): [www.twithr.co.uk](http://www.twithr.co.uk)
- Roman Roads Research Association: <http://www.romanroads.org>
- Lancashire Archaeological Society: <https://lancsarchaeologicalsociety.wordpress.com>
- Wigan Archaeology Society: [www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk](http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk)
- University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age: <https://u3asites.org.uk/lytham-st-annes>, <https://u3asites.org.uk/wyre-lancs>, <https://u3asites.org.uk/preston>

**Membership Benefits: Full Membership:** 10 meetings with voting rights, group membership of Council for British Archaeology and CBA(NW) and Lancashire Local History Federation, free training, participation in digs, basic kit loan, personal dig insurance, WA Newsletter, Wigan AS and Lancashire Local History Federation newsletters, Lancaster Uni's Centre for Regional Studies circulars. (*£12 individuals, £18 two family members at same address, full-time students up to age 21 free*). **Associate Members:** newsletter and circulars as above (*£5*).

*Subscriptions rates will be reviewed at the Annual General Meeting.*

#### WYRE ARCHAEOLOGY OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

Acting Chair	Dave Berry
Immediate Past Chair	Chris Clayton
Treasurer	Simon Millward-Hopkins
Secretary	Dave Hampson
Committee Members	Mike Edwards, Peter Scott, Helen Coulthard, Andy Jackson.
	<b>Two Vacancies.</b>

#### CONTACTS

<b>WEB</b>	<a href="http://www.wyresearchaeology.org.uk">www.wyresearchaeology.org.uk</a>
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**Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think may be interested.**